# National Tribune.

"TO CARE FOR HIM WHO HAS BORNE THE BATTLE, AND FOR HIS WIDOW AND ORPHANS."

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## STORY OF A CANNONEER

### Reminiscences of a Detached Volunteer in a Regular Battery.

### SPOTTSYLVANIA.

### Bushwhacking Upon a Very Large Scale.

### OUR INFANTRY REPULSED

### Firing at Random Through a Dense Fog.



XIII.

IN THE afternoon of May 11 the Second Corps began to move toward the left of the army. As they at first moved off by the Chancellorsville road, which was one of the routes to the rear, some of our men surmised that it was the beginning of the retreat of the army, and bets were offered that we would be across the Rappahannock in two days. But Thorpe, Packard, Sanborn, and others of our Western veterans, said that was not old Grant's style, and they insisted that the Second Corps was being taken around to attack some other part of the enemy's line. The Sixth Corps maintained its position of the day before, connecting with our left on the edge of the east clearing, and extending to the apex of the great angle.

The night of the 11th was dark and cloudy, with some rain about midnight, turning to mist or heavy fog before daylight. Between 3 and 4 a. m. one section, with two or three others from the volunteer batteries—probably Cooper's and Breck's—were moved as noiselessly as possible down the east road and put in position there in our main trenches.

In order to make as little noise as possible, we unlimbered some distance back and ran the guns into position by hand, leaving the caissons, limber-chests and teams in the rear under cover of the brush on the east side of the road.

The infantry that was in those works—some of the Maryland Brigade, I believe—told us that the Johnnies had rifle-pits in line with Spindler's House, not more than 500 or 600 feet away, and that their main line, with artillery in it, was just beyond the forks of the Brock and old Courthouse roads, about 300 yards distant.

Everybody was satisfied that

A GENERAL ASSAULT WAS INTENDED

at daybreak, and we knew that our contest with the rebel artillery in our front would almost be "muzzle to muzzle," if they remained where they had been the day before.

Meantime the other sections remained back at Alsop's in reserve, as only eight guns could be well covered in these small redoubts on either side of the Brock road. All this time other infantry of the Fifth Corps had been filing in from both flanks and massing in the darkness and fog close behind us. Everything on our side was done almost breathlessly; but we had made enough noise to attract the attention of the enemy, and they were all astir.

We could distinctly hear their officers call out from their main works to the men in their advanced pits, and could hear the latter respond, their voices sounding almost ghost-like through the fog. The Second Lieutenant explained the "lay of the ground," and said to us: "Now, boys, this is the first time you have ever fought under cover. The range is very close. You ought to be able to knock a man's head off every time. Keep cool. Don't try to work your guns too fast. Try to put your shot right under the headlogs every time. If they have embrasures, aim at them. If they fire over the tops of their parapets, aim at their muzzles. And now see what you can do."

By this time it would have been daybreak but for the fog, which was still dense. Just at this moment I heard distinctly a rebel in a rifle-pit right in our front, and not more than 150 yards distant, call out, "Look sharp there to the left" (their left). "The Yanks are up to something over there—look sharp!"

Almost before he finished the muffled sound of cheers came through the fog from the east, apparently quite distant, and then quicker than I can write it came crash on crash of heavy volleys.

For a few minutes there was a medley of cheers, yells and volleys over on our extreme left, and the enemy in our own front and in the salients of the great angle to the immediate left of us opened a heavy fire of musketry at random through the fog. Our infantry replied in the same way. The effect was very grand, the rapid volleys lighting up the gray fog fitfully, like distant lightning flashing through the clouds. I never saw anything just like it before or since. But the sounds of the battle away on our left seemed to come nearer, indicating that our troops had taken their works and were pushing for Spottsylvania Courthouse. The fog now began to lift rapidly, and soon as we could see the outlines of the enemy's works we opened with our eight guns on the Brock road, while the other Fifth Corps batteries, which had now gone in position, followed suit further to our right. The enemy replied but feebly. His guns turned out to be in the retrenched works at the base of the Angle, instead of being in the Brock road intrenchments in our immediate front, as we had expected. They had apparently been withdrawn during the night, as the infantry assured us that they had counted 14 guns in the redoubts behind the Spindler House the evening before. But now our artillery was going along the whole line, from our right clear round to the east face of the angle where Hancock was assaulting, and the enemy appeared to concentrate his guns mainly on the infantry, attacking the two faces of that work, and paid but little attention to us.

About 9 o'clock Cutler's Division (formerly Wadsworth's) was brought forward, extending some distance along our works, with its left center about at our position, and formed in two lines of battle. They swept over our works with loud cheers, and went straight for the enemy's main line. They swayed off to the left somewhat, because

A GLIMPSE OF GRANT.

the rebel works were weaker there than at the forks of the road. At all events they went

CLEAR UP TO THE ENEMY'S MAIN WORKS

in several places, but owing to the slashing and abatis they could not make a uniform attack at all points. On the east side of the Brock road the Johnnies left their first line and sought refuge in their second, which was part of the retrenchment at the base of the angle. At this, our infantry having taken possession of the first line of redoubts near the Spindler House, and our artillery being useless where we were, the Lieutenant suggested that we should get out of our own works, rush the guns across the open ground in front and run them up close against the rebel works, where we could get a fine enfilade on part of their retrenched line in reverse. But before this could be done our infantry began to recoil on our right, and then the whole line fell back to our trenches again.

Almost immediately Cutler's Division began to file out of the works by the left-flank and Gen. Warren came into the trenches in person on foot. He gave some quick orders, in a low tone, and we instantly began, with the help of a lot of infantrymen, to drag two of the sections out of the works. Getting back to the teams, we limbered up and followed Cutler, thrashing through the brush at the head of the ravine until we got into the wood road we had used on the night of the 10th, and so out into the edge of the open ground over which Upton's Brigade had charged at that time.

Here we again unlimbered, leaving our horses and drivers in the brush as before, and with the help of the infantry ran the guns by hand right up to the edge of the slashing. From this point we could enfilade the northwest face of the angle in one direction and part of their retrenched work in the other. We took the angle and Breck the retrenchment. We were now very close to their main line, but being obscured by the smoke, which settled toward us, and partly screened by the slashing, they did not detect us till we opened. Several sections of the Sixth Corps batteries were in similar position on our left—in all perhaps 10 guns. The whole angle (west face, apex and east face) was now enveloped in flame and smoke, and the sounds of assault came from every point. We had just got the range and were beginning to search their traverses with case-shot beautifully, when an Aid of Gen. Wright's came tearing down to us with orders to stop enfilading the face of the angle. "You will kill our own men!" he yelled. "The Vermonters have got in!" In a few minutes the enemy's infantry nearest us began a fusilade, which we endeavored to suppress; but they were too well covered for canister and too close to burst case effectively.

We began to tear out the slashing and heap it up in front of us for a screen, in which we were assisted by our supporting infantry. As soon as we ceased firing the enemy's infantry also ceased, and they made no effort to come out of their works at any point.

Finding it impossible to use artillery to an advantage in this position, Gen. Griffin—who had now come up at the head of his Division, following Cutler's to the assistance of the Sixth Corps at the angle,—Gen. Griffin in person ordered us to "get the guns out of that," and "go back into the woods where your horses are, for the present."

So we ran the guns back into the woods by hand, and remained there until about two in the morning of the 13th, when we limbered up and returned to our old place near Alsop's.

The infantry fighting on both faces of the angle, however, continued with unabated fury and with varying fortunes

TILL LONG AFTER DARK.

Indeed, there was quite a crackling of skirmish-fire along the west face in the Sixth Corps front, and away round our extreme left, where the Ninth Corps was, as late as two o'clock in the morning, when we limbered up to fall back to our old position. It turned out that the enemy abandoned the whole of the angle during the night of the 12th and fell back to the retrenched line across its base.

In this campaign, after the 8th of May, entire batteries were seldom used. Sections were used independently in most of the field operations, owing to the broken country, brush, narrow roads, small clearings, etc., where it was difficult to manuver so large a unit as a six-gun battery, and about the last of May all the Fifth Corps batteries, and probably the others, were cut down to four guns each.

Although the section had been fighting that day in three different positions, all close to the enemy, and once right up under his works almost, yet we had suffered no loss except two men slightly wounded and one horse—and this, oddly enough, was among the drivers in the rear, screened by brush, as before stated. It had been caused by a stray shell from the enemy which exploded near them. But nobody except the horse was seriously hurt.

We rested all day the 13th, which we sadly needed, because that night we made one of the most toilsome marches I remember in our whole career. Starting about dark in the drizzling rain, we marched by bad roads and through fields, sometimes hub-deep in mud, clear round from the extreme right of the army at Alsop's, to its extreme left near Anderson's Mill, on the Ny River, a distance of doubtless 15 miles by our round-about route, arriving completely fagged out during the forenoon of the 14th. The 14th, 15th, 16th and 17th passed without action as far as we were concerned, though the infantry skirmished constantly, and extended our breastworks steadily to our left.

On the 14th or 15th I went with a detail back to the trains for some supplies. The trains had been moved over from the Germania to the Fredericksburg road during the fights about Spottsylvania, and were guarded by Ferrero's Negro Division of the Ninth Corps. I have read long since in Badeau's "Life of Grant" that this division "fought bravely" and "handled the enemy severely" somewhere in the Wilderness campaign; but I have never yet found anyone who saw them doing it. Even Gen. Badeau omits to locate the position in which the Colored Division "handled the enemy severely."

While on this detail we came across Gen. Grant, whom I had not seen before during the campaign, except at a distance. He was at a place called Beverley's Farm, just north of the Ny Bridge on the Fredericksburg road, and Gen. Meade and a good many staff officers were with him. The road was full of wagons and ambulances, so we had to move slowly, and when we came out into the clearing and saw the big Generals, I said, "Boys, there is old Grant; let's get a good look at him."

He was on foot, as indeed were all the group, except two or three messengers, who were probably waiting for their orders.

The officers about him were nearly all taller than he was, and he was certainly the plainest dressed man in the party.

He had on a General's undress coat

MUCH THE WORSE FOR WEAR,

without shoulder-straps, but with his stars worked in the collar. His blue trousers were soiled and threadbare, and bagged at the knees.

On his head was a battered old hat that had once been military style, but was now a genuine "slouch," the only military vestige it retained being the shabby-looking gold cord that encircled it. He had no belt on, or arms of any kind about his person, though doubtless he had revolvers in his saddle holsters.

On this occasion he did not have the traditional cigar in his mouth, but stood with one foot on a small log and kept tapping his bootleg with a small riding-whip while he talked. As our detail was halted quite near him we watched our chance, and when he glanced in our direction we all saluted, which he returned with precision. As soon as we could get across the road we, of course, had to move on, and when we came back he was gone. The whole of the Fredericksburg road as far back as the old toll-gate—where our journey ended—and as far beyond as we could see, was jammed with our trains; baggage and ammunition-wagons, ambulances, disabled gun-carriages and caissons—I do not dare say how many, besides great numbers parked in the open fields as we went along. All the old houses and sheds were full of wounded who could not be moved further, and in the field west of the road, near the toll-gate, were many of the wounded rebel prisoners from Johnson's Division, captured on the morning of the 12th.

Some of these had bayonet wounds, inflicted when Barlow's men first jumped their breastworks—the first bayonet wounds I had seen. One poor devil had been bayonetted right under one nostril, breaking through his upper jaw and lacerating his tongue so he could not speak. He lay right near the toll-gate, where we halted, and I saw one of our Surgeons cleansing and dressing his wound. He must have got "a down-lunge" from one of our fellows on the top of the breastwork. The Surgeon, in reply to my question, said the wound was not necessarily dangerous, though he would probably always have an impediment in his speech! I presume more bayonet wounds were inflicted the 12th of May at Spottsylvania than in all the other battles of the war put together.

As but comparatively few of the wounded of Spottsylvania had been sent to Acquia Creek as yet, I presume there were 15,000 of them strung along the road at this time. But I will not attempt to describe the scene. Suffice to say that it was even more horrible than that "second night of Gettysburg," described in foregoing pages.

On the 18th four batteries of the Fifth Corps—Walcott's, Winslow's, Mink's, and two sections of ours—went into position at what we called the "Deserted House," at a point about due east from Spottsylvania Courthouse, and near Anderson's Bridge, over the Ny. We can-

THE OLD OAKEN BUCKET.

nonaded the rebel works in the immediate front of Spottsylvania Courthouse at intervals nearly all day, but with no special incident.

This ended the battle, or rather the battles, of Spottsylvania. We had been engaged 11 days,—from the 8th to the 18th inclusive,—and had been under fire six days out of the 11. Our losses in all of these battles were one officer and seven men killed or mortally wounded, and one officer and 11 men wounded severely, and seven or eight more slightly. But few of our horses had been hit, but they had hardly been unharnessed from May 5 to 18, and were in consequence badly galled under the collars and saddle-pads; our forage supply had been irregular and insufficient, and, generally speaking, our horses were "done up." But we got a new supply to some extent from the Reserve Artillery, which had not been engaged at all thus far, and which was broken up at this time, and its men and horses transferred largely to the corps batteries.

The batteries had enjoyed but comparatively small chance of usefulness in this

"BUSHWHACKING ON A GRAND SCALE,"

known as the Wilderness and Spottsylvania campaign. We had not been once real sharply charged by infantry in the open. I do not think we expended a dozen rounds of canister per gun in the whole campaign. Most of our work had been cannonading earthworks from unfavorable positions, or in minor demonstrations connected with infantry assaults. But we had done everything that had been required of us, and had been willing to do more.

The night when we went into position on the east front of Spottsylvania Courthouse (I think it was the night of the 16th or 17th of May), I had a little difficulty. I had been on fatigue duty all the forenoon, and just at dark we got orders to make a redoubt for our guns. This required log cutting, and the Acting Orderly-Sergeant told me off with an ax party and two teams to "snake" the logs.

I pleaded that I had been on fatigue duty already nearly all day; but he replied, with affected surprise, "Well, this is the first time I ever knew you to 'beat off'"!

This riled me, as I always took pride in never having asked to be excused from duty a single day, or even an hour, and I replied hotly, "Any man that says I am a dead-beat is a —— ——liar!"

The old Sergeant—who, by the way, was one of my best friends, and most powerful man in the battery physically—took this good naturedly, but caught me by the ear and pulled it sharply, and said, "Go on and do as I tell you; I didn't call you a dead-beat. I said this was the first time I ever knew you to 'beat off.' Go on, now, quick; I'll relieve you in two hours."

So I started off; but, unfortunately, the Second Lieutenant had overheard the above conversation; so he halted me, called me to him and very gravely told me that I had been "insubordinate in the face of the enemy, a crime punishable with death," etc., but that he would not prefer charges this time on account of my previous good conduct. He must rebuke such behavior, and therefore I must go on fatigue duty all night, or until the works were finished! "And this," he added, "in view of the gravity of your offense, can hardly be called punishment."

Then I ran after the detail, already half way to the grove where we were to cut the logs, and the way we sent timber down to the position was a caution. Finally, in about two hours, a relief came for the men, and, to my surprise, Packard, who came with them, said, "I relieve you; go and turn in."

"But 'Old Jack' said I was to stay here all night."

"Yes, I know; but the Sergeant begged you off. You can go."

So I went back.

APOLOGIZED TO THE SERGEANT,

asked his pardon, and then got part of a night's rest. But it taught me a lesson—to be less free with my tongue—at least among my own friends. The Orderly was really wrong in detailing me, because I was just off fatigue duty. But in that campaign there was not much chance for nice distinctions, and so I should have obeyed without a word of back talk. Finally, after all attempts to force their main lines around Spottsylvania had failed, we drew back across the Ny after dark on the 18th, and two days later abandoned that "fortnight's battleground," swung around by our left flank again, and started for Jericho Ford.

To be perfectly candid, I think on the whole that the enemy had the best of it in the battles around Spottsylvania Courthouse. They were fighting behind strong cover all the time, both infantry and artillery, and never once showed up in the open. The only great success we gained was the capture of Edward Johnson's Division by the Second Corps on the 12th of May, and even that advantage was neutralized by the subsequent events of that day. As our troops were assaulting all the time, our losses were necessarily greater than theirs;—at least two to one, and probably more, even including the prisoners taken in Johnson's Division. One of Gen. Lee's biographers says that Lee was astonished when he saw Grant moving again to the left, as he had fully expected the Army of the Potomac to recoil from Spottsylvania and make the best of its way to the north bank of the Rappahannock. This might have been a natural supposition, as Gen. Lee was doubtless reasoning from his previous experience. But he did not know that the Army of the Potomac had come to stay this time, and that even though it had lost nearly 40,000 men in the Wilderness and around Spottsylvania, those who remained were none the less determined to "fight it out on that line." I venture to say that there was never another army in the world that would have started off by its flank in another advance after such a series of sanguinary repulses as the Army of the Potomac suffered about Spottsylvania Courthouse.

At this time, as I before stated, the corps batteries received some recruits and new horses from the Reserve Artillery, just broken up, and also three or four entire batteries, among which was Bigelow's 9th Mass. and "Paddy" Hart's 15th N. Y.

The new men were mostly trained artillerists, and the horses also were well drilled, so the reinforcement was very valuable and brought us up to a strong complement again; and as they were as much veterans as we were, there was no distinction felt or shown as between them and our own remaining "Old Boys."

This 15th N. Y. battery—Paddy Hart's—had the reputation in the Reserve Artillery, where they had been for a year or so, of being "tough." I have heard that it was largely recruited from about Albany and Troy, and was made up of a class of men who

TRAVELED ON THEIR MUSCLE,

a very dangerous reputation to be cavorting about with in the neighborhood of our battery. We had about a dozen men who were, without boasting, the best men of their inches in the Army of the Potomac, pick where you would. They were peaceable enough among themselves, but if any other gang came along with chips on their shoulders or dragging their coat-tails on the ground—Tipperary fashion—a collision was a mere question of time, and there was little doubt as to the result of it.

Marching, as I said, toward the North Anna, we arrived at a crossroads called Mt. Carmel Church about noon on the 23d, and from there our battery followed Bartlett's Brigade out on the road to Jericho Ford. At this place there was an old mill, but the dam was gone, and Bartlett's Brigade floundered across through the bed of the creek and formed on the opposite bank. Meantime a pontoon bridge was laid below the old mill, and all of the 12-pounder batteries crossed on it and went into position—four guns each—on the high ground in front of a house called, I believe, Fountaine's House, ours forming in the dooryard. The rifle batteries remained on the north bank of the river. While crossing the North Anna our rear gun ran one of its wheels off the edge of the bridge and blocked the way. As I was in the left of the battery, which was moving left in front, I did not witness this, but heard of it. Stewart at once proceeded to extricate the gun, and while he was doing so Gen. Grant came along, and finding the way blocked, became impatient, and began to give orders directly to the men, apparently disregarding the Captain. The latter saluted him, and said:

"General, if you will permit me, sir, I will take care of this gun!"

"Very well," replied Grant; "you probably know better how to do it than I do!"

The gun was soon extricated, but the fact was that Grant's presence flustrated the men. However, he was very good natured about it.

I shall always remember this place because of the old well there from which we filled our canteens. It had an old-fashioned "well sweep," and the bucket actually had moss on it—which impelled me to a recitation of two or three verses of the "Old Oaken Bucket," which the boys greeted with cheers.

But there was no time for sentiment, because we were now in plain sight of the Virginia Central Railroad, and the enemy was evidently preparing to attack us before we could intrench.

It was now perhaps 4 o'clock. Our infantry—the Iron Brigade and other troops of Cutler's Division—were still "extending to the right," when the enemy attacked them front and flank, and they began to fall back rapidly, though in good order, toward our position. As soon as we could safely fire over their heads we opened with case, which we changed to canister as soon as our front was sufficiently clear. Some of the 7th Wis. men, who reformed about the house in our rear, told us that our canister sang songs in their ears as they came up the hill.

There was an amusing circumstance in this little flurry. The rebels followed the retreating troops of the Iron Brigade closely, keeping along the bank of the river until they came under a heavy cross-fire from our guns on the hill and our rifle batteries on the north bank. This made them lie down, and the fire was so hot that their retreat was cut off. In this way as many as 600 of them were compelled to surrender by our infantry advancing again, and those prisoners declared their belief that the rapid retreat of the Iron Brigade was simply a device to draw them into the trap. That was the way it turned out, but I don't believe there was any premeditation of that sort on the part of the Iron Brigade. That brigade had speed as well as pluck, but did not often call the former into play. As it was now almost dark, pickets were thrown out and we bivouacked in position. We remained in this position all night, intrenching by reliefs during the night. The Sixth Corps—or part of it—also came up and reinforced us before morning. Early this morning—the 24th—the enemy began demonstrating, skirmishing and sharpshooting against our right front and flank. One section was now put in position on the knoll west of the Fountaine House, where they opened with case on the rebel skirmishers. In this affair the battery lost Corp'l Elbridge G. Packard, mortally wounded, and four others wounded, none of them severely. This young gentleman was one of my best friends, and I desire to

PAY A TRIBUTE TO HIS MEMORY.

He was about 25 years of age. His native State, I think, was Maine, but he enlisted in Wisconsin at the very first toesin in May, 1861. He was at that time teaching school, at a place called Sun Prairie. I had known him when I was a boy, and it was by his advice that I got detached to the battery. He was a prime favorite with our officers, and Stewart considered him one of the best all-round men he had. He had a long record of gallantry and

ROUGH AND TUMBLE.

honorable mention in battle reports; beginning, I think, as far back as Antietam—or perhaps Bull Run, and including Gettysburg and Spottsylvania. But his bright career was forever blighted in this miserable skirmish at the North Anna. It will be remembered that I spoke of his having a presentiment that he would fall in battle, in my description of the old field of Antietam.

We all tried to comfort him by telling him that he would pull through, and all that, though we knew he couldn't, because he was hit in the abdomen, and his death was only a question of a few days. Just at sundown they loaded him into an ambulance and took him away. I never saw him again. I heard that he died two or three days afterward. Poor Packard! He deserves a more eloquent eulogy than I can give him. All I can say of him is that he was one of Stewart's best and bravest Cannoneers!

We remained in this position till daylight of the 24th. Then we advanced to the left front until we reached the track of the Virginia Central Railroad. Here we went into battery, and some strange infantry came up to support us.

We soon learned that this was a division of the Ninth Corps, commanded by Gen. Crittenden, who had just come from the West, and had been temporarily attached to that Corps. Part of them were Stevenson's old Division, of the Ninth Corps, which we had known at the Wilderness Tavern May 6, and which had been broken up after Spottsylvania. The rest were troops that had come from the Western army.

Our position was just south of the track of the railroad, and near a house called Lowery's. Light intrenchments were thrown up in an incredibly short time, entirely of earth, as there was no convenient timber except a few rails. The house was on our line, the breastworks passing through its front yard. The occupants, an old gentleman and two or three women, stood on their porch and watched our men dig. One of our officers approached and told them they ought to go to the rear, as they would be in great danger when the firing began, as this was not more than 100 rods from the rebel works. The old gentleman replied, with a perceptible effort to be dramatic, "No, sir; never, sir! I am too old to fight. I can do nothing, sir, for my invaded State but to die in my home!"

"But, my dear sir," persisted the officer, "if you should die in your home it would be by bullets of your own friends, and I don't see what good that could do your State."

Finally the old gentleman saw the absurdity of his position, and all the inmates of the house went up the railroad track to the rear. The enemy's works in our front were apparently strong, but he showed no disposition to come out of them, and our infantry did not attack. We fired several rounds of case to make him develop his artillery, but elicited no reply, and after a while we ceased.

The rebel infantry kept up a constant fusilade of sharpshooting, which was pretty effective considering that the range was over 100 rods. No one was hit with us, but the volunteer batteries suffered some; Breck and Hart losing several men. While in this position, as we were not firing, the men were all ordered to keep down behind the little earthwork. But my curiosity got the best of me. I had a small field-glass, which I had picked up in one of our movements at Spottsylvania, and I was standing up with my body against the tire of the wheel and resting the glass on the top of the tire to survey their works, when a sharpshooter's bullet struck the tire just forward of the top, on the downward curve of the wheel, and "spattered." Thin scales of it went through my cap and lodged in my hair, but none of them cut the skin.

"Probably you'll keep down now, as I told you to," remarked the Second Lieutenant, who was sitting on the trail of the gun. "Maybe you'll obey that kind of orders, if you won't mine," he added with grim sarcasm.

He was quite right. I "obeyed the orders" of the rebel sharpshooter implicitly, and my head was not seen above the works again. My curiosity had for once been completely satisfied.

I used to have a theory that I "bore a charmed life," as the saying is; that no ball was made for me, and all that sort of thing, and used to brag about it. So, when I got down with alacrity on this occasion, the boys all laughed at me. It was a close call. If the bullet had come three inches higher it would have got me

RIGHT OVER THE BRIDGE OF THE NOSE,

and these reminiscences would have remained unwritten.

We remained in these little works all day the 25th, watching the enemy, while some of the infantry and cavalry tore up the railroad track in our rear as far as they could go. At night we recrossed the North Anna. As soon as it was dark the next evening we moved off to the left and marched that night toward the Pamunkey River, and just at sundown on the 27th reached a place about two miles from Hanovertown. As we were going into bivouac here, Hart's battery came up and halted on our flank.

At this place the forage-wagons were in train together some distance in the rear. Van Dusen, who was wounded at Spottsylvania, used to take care of "Old Tartar," (Stewart's horse, previously mentioned as having had his tail shot off at Bull Run and afterward wounded at Fredericksburg, etc.) During the rest of this campaign "Old Tartar" was an orphan, and the Cannoneers used to chip in all round to curry him and get his rations. He used to follow the battery like a dog, and he knew every man in it, and, as may be imagined, was a universal pet.

So, I was taking my turn to bring forage for "Old Tartar" and had got as far as the place where the little brook crossed the Hanover road, with a nose-bag of oats for the four-footed veteran, when I laid the nose-bag on the ground in order to fill my canteen from the brook, it being then nearly dark. Several of Hart's men were in the road on the same errand as I was, and as I laid the nose-bag down one of them "snapped it," as we used to say in the slang of the army; that is to say, he grabbed it up and made off with it. Seeing this, I ran after him, and, catching up with him, seized the nose-bag. This at once resulted in a rough-and-tumble fight, which for a few moments was not interfered with. Hart's man was doubtless older than I was; at least I judge so from the fact that he had a slight mustache, while I was still smooth-faced. But I was chunkier, heavier and stronger than he was, and so I threw him in the clinch; but as I

REACHED FOR HIS THROAT

with my left hand he closed his chin down on his neck, and I ran my fore and middle fingers right into his mouth. He shut his teeth down on them, crushing the middle finger of my left hand to a pulp, though I managed to extricate the forefinger. Meantime I was hammering him under the ear with my right fist to make him let go. Hart's men declared that I was trying to get my revolver, and that was the reason why they interfered; but if I did so, it was for the purpose of hammering him with the barrel of it to make him let go of my finger, as I could not have had the intention to shoot him in such a fight as that. But at this moment several of his comrades rushed in, and some of them seized me by the legs, pulling me off from him, and holding me up by the legs in a perfectly helpless posture. He quickly disengaged himself, rose up and began kicking me about the head and face, while his comrades held me up by the legs. This attracted the attention of our veterans, and as soon as they noticed the foul play of Hart's men, they reinforced me with their accustomed vigor and effectiveness in such cases. The result was a storm of shouts, oaths and blows on all sides, and I was literally buried under a mass of men who were knocked down on top of me and my antagonist, and this was immediately succeeded by a forcible intervention of the officers of both batteries, who at once restored the peace and separated the combatants into their respective camps.

On the whole this might be called "a draw" all around, and the bloody noses were pretty fairly distributed. Hart's boys were good ones. When quiet was restored Stewart at once demanded an explanation of the row. I related all the facts, with which he seemed to be satisfied, as he paid no further attention to the matter. But he remarked that he "should think that the boys could get fighting enough in that campaign without chawing each other up!" I might say here that while Stewart did not countenance his men in picking quarrels with other troops, he always expected them to

TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES

in proper shape if they were imposed on, and that he very seldom, if ever, punished one of his men for fighting outside of the battery. But he would not allow his men to fight among themselves. In fact, they seldom ever quarreled.

I suppose this may be described as a "great battle not mentioned in the official reports." I was not much hurt, except that my left eyebrow was laid open by a kick, and the finger, which he got in his mouth and chewed the end of it all to a pulp, was deformed for life. He had the bridge of his nose smashed, one cheek laid open almost to the bone, and a big lump over one temple. We afterward met and agreed to fight it out according to ring rules as soon as the batteries got into some regular camp. But that was the last of it. In fact, my recollection is that this poor fellow was killed in front of Petersburg soon afterward.

At this time the soldiers were all tired out with the incessant marching, fighting, manuvering, etc.; the night marches particularly being terribly exhausting. Their clothing was in rags, particularly the infantry, who had long ago thrown away their knapsacks and many of them their woollen blankets. Rations were irregular, and often bad. The fresh beef, which was driven along on the hoof in the rear and slaughtered as needed, was poor, stringy and tough, as the animals, if they ever had been fat, had lost all of it on account of constant marching and scanty pasture. Company cooking was always difficult and generally impossible, so that the men had to boil their own coffee in their tin cups as best they could. Add to this the actual hard labor of log cutting and digging, required to make the miles and miles of fieldworks that marked our path from the Rapidan to the Pamunkey, and I presume no one will dispute that the Army of the Potomac in these last days of May, 1864, was in a sad plight.

In this campaign I fully realized the personal advantages of the artillery as a branch of service. On the marches we could ride or walk, as we liked. We had no harassing picket duty and no skirmishing. We had to take our share of digging and log cutting in the fortification work, but we had teams to "snake" our logs, while the poor infantry had to carry or haul theirs by hand. Above all, we never had to "throw away our knapsacks," as we could always find some way to stow them on the guns or caisson-carriages, or strap them on the "off-horse valise-saddles." So there never was any reason why an artilleryman should not be well clothed. But taken as a whole, the Army of the Potomac at this time was pretty well fagged out physically; but there was nothing the matter with its solid old nerve!

Speaking of the nerve of the army and the average spirit of the soldiers, I have often read in battle descriptions of the "strange light in men's faces, the wild look in their eyes," and all that sort of thing. I must say that I never saw any of this in the battery. It may be that the infantry, when they get at close quarters, where the work is very deadly, look so; but I never noticed any unusual facial expression on the part of artillerymen in battle. As a rule they seemed to regard the whole thing as a matter of business, and went about their duties very much like men working at their trade. I recall some incidents in point. Our Sergeant Thorpe, from one of the Wisconsin regiments, was a very handsome fellow in face and figure, and he used to take great pains with his dress and personal appearance. He was a young man of excellent family, well bred, and, I think, of collegiate education. He was always exceedingly polite and considerate in all his intercourse with the comrades; in fact, Thorpe was the "Chesterfield" of the battery. His courage was quite on a par with the elegance of his manners, and he was mentioned for conspicuous gallantry in every battle report of his commanding officer, from Bull Run to Bethesda Church. In one of the very hottest cannonades we had, Thorpe appeared in his parade uniform, clean and neat, with his jacket closely buttoned, and fitting him "like the paper on the wall." It had rained the night before, and the ground in our position was soft. So, when one of the enemy's shot ricochetted close to Thorpe, it simply deluged him with mud from head to foot. He looked at his ruined uniform with an expression of profound disgust, which was indescribably comical under the circumstances. One of the boys noticed this, and called out to him: "Well, Ed, you know the old saying, that 'mud loves a shining mark!'" He did not make any answer to this impertinent remark, but busied himself scraping the thickest of the mud off his elegant uniform. Many times I have heard the boys crack jokes and poke fun at one another, right under the heaviest fire, in this manner.

There was an incident of Antietam, in the most murderous part of the fight at the Cornfield. Ira Slawson, from the 23d N. Y., was No. 1 on one of the guns of Stewart's section. Some of the 20th N. Y. were in line with the

(Continued on 2d page.)

## TWEEN TWO FIRES.

### An Old Virginian's Experiences During the War.

### CHAMPION YARNS.

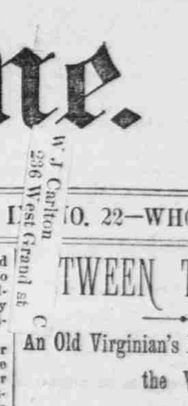
### Stories Told by Braggarts of Both Armies.

### PROMINENT MEN KILLED.

### The Inauguration of Jeff Davis and A. H. Stephens.

BY WM. E. DOYLE, STEVENSBURG, VA.

II.



A MAN situated as I was would, of course, hear a great amount of boasting done by soldiers on both sides when they were narrating their wonderful adventures and hairbreadth escapes to the old citizen. They believed that he was capable of believing anything, except that they were after his chickens. Every soldier who came in and entertained the family never dreamed that you suspected that his eloquence was intended to distract your attention while his "chum" reconnoitered the premises to the rear, the stables or henhouses. Oh, no! I was very confiding in the early part of the war, and it was not until it had progressed some time that I felt satisfied that the man who could give a full and thrilling description of a battle, with the movements of every corps and division, must have been either with the wagon-train or hospital department. I felt certain, from the accounts of participants and from personal observation, that the officer or soldier

CONFEDERATE COFFEE-COOLER. FEDERAL COFFEE-COOLER.

who is attending to his own business in a battle has little opportunity to know what is going on beyond his command. I used to be astonished at first at the great familiarity of the Generals with the privates, according to the narratives of these farm-house rangers.

For instance, a Confederate soldier was telling me about the battle of Sharpsburg, as we call Antietam, and bragging about his exploits with the remarkable gun he carried, when he said:

"Jist as I drawed her up to fire agin up rides Uncle Bob, an' sez he to me, 'Hold up, Bill; don't yer see that air Yankee battery comin' in on our left? Them air Yanks is goin' to fenfilade our line, an' I want you to jist knock them gunners.'

"'All right, Gineral,' sez I; an' I rests ole hunderd on a stump, an' every time a Yankee tried to pull the string to shoot a cannon off I popped him over, an' at last the Yanks got so skeert that they jist hitched up their guns an' got out of that in a hurry. Jist then up comes Uncle Bob, an' sez he to me, 'Bill, you sont 'em too close for them fellows; you made 'em sick all over.'

"'Yes, Gineral, they can't stand afore ole hunderd,' sez I, pattin' my gun, and he jist laughed an rode off; an' from that time out he always hollers at me when he goes by, an' sez,

"'BILL, HOW'S OLE HUNDERD?'"

Again, a Federal soldier was telling me about the Seven Pines battle, and said:

TOSSING STONE IN A BLANKET.

"Thay were a dhrivin' us loike the very divil, phin up comes Little Mac, an sez he:

"'Phat are ye's fallin' back for, Mike? Are yees out ov ammynition?'

"'We are, Giniral,' sez I.

"'Thin,' sez he, 'go back beyant the